

JEREMY VINCENT

Horror hostess is a scream!

THE familiar tale of a struggling entertainer climbing the ladder to success couldn't be more colorfully illustrated than with Cassandra Peterson, better known as horror hostess Elvira.

The whacky actress/writer, whose buxom figure and spitfire double entendres have made her a cult figure as a film presenter on the small screen, has burst forth with her own brand of entertainment in the full-length adventure Elvira, Mistress Of The Dark (Roadshow).

But true to type, Cassandra has done her stint in small-time entertaining as a nightclub dancer, perhaps expanding on her childhood experiences when she raided her mother's small costume shop "to stage elaborate song and dance extravaganzas".

Elvis Presley caught her act when she was 18 and advised her to



• Elvira... a not-so-subtle mix of Vincent Price, Mae West and Morticia Addams.

expand into Europe. There she toured extensively with an Italian rock group before film director Federico Fellini nabbed her for several vignettes in his classic Fellini's Roma.

Her biggest break came in 1981 when she landed the role of horror hostess on a Los Angeles television station.

She was the first hostess to be taped in 3-D, a gimmick which sent nearly three million viewers out to buy 3-D glasses.

Such is her following that in recognition of her national popularity, LA mayor Tom Bradley proclaimed March 9 Elvira Day.

On the big screen Elvira, a not-so-subtle mix of Vincent Price, Mae West and Morticia Addams,

travels to the sleepy town of Fallwell to collect on her aunt's will. Not surprisingly, the town will never be the same again.

Full of clever one-liners, the film succeeds with a clever mix of Elvira's no-holds-barred approach to life and her uncompromising style and produces more than a few laughs as she bulldozes Fallwell. Whether any future films can maintain this frantic pace remains to be seen.

Jessica's bitter harvest

KEEN to become more deeply involved in her film career, Jessica Lange (left) continues to work both behind and in front of the camera.

In Country (Roadshow), which she also co-produced, she plays mid-American farmer's wife Jewell Ivy, whose family is being forced off the land for defaulting on government loan repayments.

Husband Gil, who does not cope with the situation as well as his spouse, is played by Sam Shepard.

The powerful drama is beautifully shot and further captures the desolation of the rural midwest with a haunting soundtrack.

TV WEEK, 7/4/90 73

Freeze FRAMES

AWARD-winning Broadway actor/writer Harvey Fierstein brings stunning pathos to the role of Arnold, a New York female impersonator, in the film version of his stage hit Torch Song Trilogy (RCA-Columbia). Those who saw the play in Australia will want to see this film, a worthy extension to the live theatre production.

THE following lucky TV WEEK readers have won a copy of the Rolling Stone 20 Years Of Rock And Roll video: M. McGee, Balgownie, NSW; C.I. Wilson and W.M. Hunter, Diamond Creek, Vic; Mr M.J. Green, Hackham, SA; June Taylor, Palm Beach, Qld; Toni Hayward, Toombul, Qld; Joel Pinczewski, Kew, Vic; Ed Rockett, Taringa, Qld; R. Burton, Shepparton, Vic. Allen Briggs, Felixston, SA; Miss Mitra Behjat, Rosanna, Vic.

